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APR 13 1926

ONE WORD OF NONSENSE

(From our Tragedies)

In 3 Acts Including Interlude

BY

PAUL STEIN

Place: America

Time: Present

Characters

Mr. Jacobs:	A prosperious American Jew
Anna:	His wife
Lillian:	Their only daughter about 22 years of age and a rare beauty
Philip:	Their nephew about 20 years of age
Calman Gurack:	An old fashioned bearded proprietor
Sarah:	Gurack's wife
Abram:	Son of Gurack
Elizabeth:	Niece of Gurack about 17 years old
Mr. Rubin:	Abram's friend

ACT I

In Mr. Jacob's parlor

Elizabeth:	(Reclining near the side of the divan)
Philip:	(Is seated on the arm of the divan)
Elizabeth:	Stop, someone will soon be here!
Philip:	How much will you bet that everyone has gone home hm?
Elizabeth:	(Looking at him as if to say "wont you leave me alone"
Philip:	(looks around and attempts to hug her but hears approaching footsteps)
Elizabeth:	(Arises quickly and in doing so accidently bumps her head against his chin)

Philip: (catches his tongue) om...

Elizabeth: (bursts into laughter and runs from the room)

Philip: (follows her)

Abram and Lillian: (enter, arm in arm)

Lillian: I did not mean it (blushingly) I only wanted your opinion on it

Abram: (smiling) and if so? You have the right to your taughts, and I will by a chance remind you, how easy going is your word, without a basis, but not now, because I know you are not fond of (surrendering) is not that so? (the cries of Elizabeth are heard "go away")

Elizabeth: & Philip; (enter)

Elizabeth: did aunt and uncle go home yet?

Abram: You hear them them conversing there.

Elizabeth: I went with Philip to escort the guests and I noticed that the house was dark

Lillian: and I thought that you and Philip just left here. .

Elizabeth: (flushing)

Philip: We were here a little while ago.

Elizabeth: yes, we were here once before, and now the second time...- ah - I wanted to ask Lillian something, and I forgot what,

Philip: ha ha, I know what, Lillian does not want to hear it ha, ha, (rolling into the other room)

Elizabeth: (thinks a little, then says with drooping eyes) and you Abram are remaining here?

Abram: I believe I will go soon,

Elizabeth: (going) I will wait for aunt (exit)

Abram: (to Lillian) well come also,

Lillian: (is silent angrily)

Abram: You need not be angry Lillian. I did not mean to hurt you. In other words, I only want to show you that you could undertake quicker then I to prove even what you feel at certain moments impossible. I told you that if I would be thoughtless at any rouse moment you would not have feeling for the negative. You would not have the power to be obstinate, and that you showed when you were with me the first in my home, as soon as you felt that you wouldn't be interrupted, you pressed yourself tightly in my arms, twisted me over you and afterwards moved me with your lips and then murmured to yourself--well, what was that?

Lillian: That's nothing

Abram: That's nothing!

Lillian: I think that every woman in love would do the same, especially after such thirty kisses as those.

Abram: Yes, I say that every woman would rightly do it but would I not be considerate in such a moment could you control your feelings?

Lillian: Yes, I would surely not be pleased.

Abram: And I say that you lie.

Lillian: Let us wager

Abram: Wager, that means taking strictly on oneself that which is an impossibility.

Lillian: And I tell you most certainly that I feel quite natural, and that not only up to the wedding would I undertake it but even one year from the wedding.

Abram: The more I know you the more you show me that your word is not fundamental.

Lillian: And I tell you yes!' Do you know what; let us agree between ourselves that one year from the wedding there will be no sexual conjugation. Furthermore, I would not like to be tied to a child so soon. Abram, let us agree on that.. you know that after our wedding what matters if we are free a little while.

Abram: Well, how about that of which we spoke yesterday about a normal bringing up of children.

Lillian: Well, what does it matter if it will be a year later

Abram: How lightly you speak of that, Ha.

Lillian: Well where is there such a great philosophy?

Abram: That is that which slipped your tongue before, you now mean earnestly? You decided upon that to wait one year from the wedding.

Lillian: Indeed, earnestly.

Abram: Well, one hour later when all will have gone and I unrestrained with your hands tie around beneath my clothes my nude body, will you then think the same?

Lillian: What does that matter.

Abram: It does not really matter but I tell you again that you are lieing.

Lillian: Well, why should not you believe me?

Abram: Because I have not what to believe. I know that woman are capable of freeing themselves from the fondness of men but as soon as it comes to women, the desire for complete satisfaction it is often stronger than that of men, and when a woman undertakes to do such a thing that you mention, it is simply an absurdity.

Lillian: (sulkingly) and I tell you that it is not so.

Abram: Won't you give in?

Lillian: (Angry) Just look, there is really nothing to give in to.

Abram: There is your great defect.

Lillian: Other's defects are easily noticed, you think I comprehend nothing and amy only capable of carefree talking.

Abram: Am I mistaken?

Lillian: Yes! and if you want to make sure prove it.

Abram: There is nothing to it.

Lillian: (Determined) and I tell you yes! (stretching out her hand) here! I give you my hand that-

Abram: (Gently repulses her hand) Nonsense.- I know that you dont know what you are doing.

Lillian: I do know.

Abram: Do you really mean to wager?

Lillian: Yes!

Abram: Do you think that you will not regret this.

Lillian: No.

Abram: (Thinks a while then extends his hand and as she is about to take it he withdraws it)

Lillian: Well, why do you renig? Are you afraid?

Abram: I am not afraid, but I draw back because if I once give my hand there will be no time to repent.

Lillian: Well why should that worry you, if I will regret later that will only affect me.

Abram: Who is speaking of affects. I dont believe that he who does not keep his word sins and becomes punished but I know that he who gives his word and hand should have enough courage to hold it and should possess enough conscience not to sin against oneself. Do you feel that you agree in all these respects. If so, I will accept your hand.

Lillian: Yes.

Abram: Then receive my hand.(stretching it out, and Lillian accepts it automatically) And know that I will hold my word even then when your lips which have a while ago uttered "praise of you" will later be forced with grief to speak "of your wickedness" (voices are heard in the adjoining room)

Lillian: (Droops her eyes)

Abram: (nervously twitches his fingers on a magazine lying on the arm of the divan.

Sarah: (Before entering) What do you say- it is daylight, Jacob

Sarah: Anna, Calman, Sarah (come in)

Jacob: Hat Aha, enjoyed a little while, what of it, will be a few hours less sleep.

Sarah: We never go to bed early (pointing to Abram) especially this son God bless him. He never tires of reading deep into his books until half past midnight. Such were the older children and so is he.

Anna: Well for that he will have a chance to rest (winking to Lillian) He, he, he,

Calman: You first caught the right place.

Anna: What do you mean, he leaves her after midnight.

Calman: (Ironically) is that so, ah! then try to guess how long he is up after he comes and finally he winds up in bed.

Jacob: (Half sarcastically) We can' t say that is ba-a-d, but to much is excess. (lights a cigar). It is true that it is his pleasure but all things have a limit. He says it is not so! No shall be no, I will not contradict him.

Calman: You see, your opposition would be useless, but if she, Lillian I mean would coax him, he would consider.

Lillian: I think if Abram felt that it hurt him he would himself be careful.

Sarah: Just what I thought probably he understands. Well come on Calman, truly it is almost day, and you Abram, are remaining?

Abram: I think I will go soon.

Lillian: No, you will stay a little longer.

Sarah: Certainly, you may stay a while yet.

Calman: It is as destiny decrees isn' t that so? Otherwise, we would not chose neighbors and they wouldn't get acquainted, Ha.Ha.Ha

Anna: Really, a decreed, think

Sarah: Mi with many years my God. Just as you see him. He always said he had time, he must learn..but if it was destined then not many thoughts and with God's help if we (will) live up to after Easter, then is time enough for the wedding. How long is it until Easter? S everal more months, well are we going yet?

Lillian: I don't know really what the hurry is. You wanted the one word of the engagment because otherwise you did not understand the surety of our love, but the wedding could be delayed anoth r year.

Abram: That not, you see.

Jacob: (Angry) Why for a year? You may as well say three since you are postponing, it does not matter.

Anna: Why are you excited? She only said that but didn't mean it.

Lillian: I actually did mean it and I woul..

Abram: (Interrupting) If you wouldn't remind that it would be more pleasing.

Sarah: Go on, don't be a child. W hy? Once said be it done, and let it be a lucky hour.

Abram: (Laughing inwardly) She sends forth a word into the air and they grasp it. Go, go to sleep contented.

Sarah: Certainly,-come goodnight. all (kisses Lillian) Good night. (everyone bids good night, Calman and Sarah depart)

Anna: Well, we may also go now, goodnight children

Jacob: Goodnight.

Lillian: Abram:(answer) Goodnight. (both remain silent awhile)

Abram: (Raises his head looks at her awhile and says) well do you see? Before like a victor taunted me for being afraid of accepting, well?

Lillian: What now!

Abram: Why did you want to put off our wedding for a year?

Lillian: It is still all the same. Since waiting what is the difference if marrying or not.

Abram: The distinction is to a great extent a very large one. If you could wait another year not to marry in order to carry out any of your stubborn ideas that I know it is easily understood that you would not have enough courage to cross the traditions from which you have not freed yourself, but could you withstand the temptation being free from all obstacles and feeling entirely near me and then hold back a year, that is what I did not believe you. If you before misunderstood me, you can now withdraw your word.

Lillian: Before I understood it very well and my last proposition about delaying the wedding was a mistake. Just as you said before, "I threw a word into the air" but the hand that I pledged, I will retain.

Abram: Well, if you speak so seriously? Surprisingly now I will believe you, come here!(stretching out his arms) Well..why do you think you begged me to remain awhile?

Lillian: (Does not answer drooping her head, her eyes raised against their lashes, thinking what have I done)

Abram: Well (warmly) Lillian (takes her hand and declamatingly says) Father, Mother they are asleep.

Lillian: Lifts her eyes towards him. There appears on her countenance a slightly noticeable but deep smile that seems to say "I am pretty, I know you will forgive me")

Abram: (Shakes his head mournfully) I understand, yeat I understand but it shall not be.

Lillian: Turns pale a slight nervous shudder runs through her frame with childish pouting lips she stammers. You are guilty.

CURTAIN SLOWLY DROPS.

ACT II

(A dining room, a door in the center leading to a luxurious bed chamber, a small electric light is burning throwing a little light into the dining room.)

Lillian: Is seated in night garb leaning on the table dozing.

Abram: Comes in from the bedroom with trowsers drawn over his night clothes, a pair of bedroom slippers on his bare feet, goes to Lillian slowly quietly places his hand upon her head and gently pats her hair.

Lillian: (awakens, raises her head toward him gazes at him a while lowers her head on the table which she encircles with her arms)

Abram: (As to a child imploringly) Lillian come, you are uncomfortable that way.

Lillian: (Overweighing her shoulders forcibly) Icannot.

Abram: But this is no plan either.

Lillian: I cannot help that.

Abram: (Heaves a sigh and raising his brows "m.m. and slowly retreats)

Lillian: (Raises her head and says helplessly Abram..

Abram: (Remains standing and looks at her attentively)

Lillian: I beg of you..do you love me (again lowers her head not being able of begging)

Abram: (Retraces his steps)

Lillian: (Resentfully begs) Abram do not go, without me.

Abram: Am I not entreating you to come with me.

Lillian: Promise me that you-will-love-me.

Abram: It seems to me that no matter how naire you would be you would notice that.

Lillian: Then promise to forget our wager.

Abram: (Shakes his head reproachfully, pause) I will forget! Do you know when? At the expiration of the year. I love you not for your alertness and cleverness! and for that I was ready to free you from your word. I f you could not feel what you were doing, I am faultless. I don't want to punish you by any means. I want my future life, then when we shall have children should be fundamentally harmonious not roaming and this at present will give you experience that one must be careful, is it impossible to control the consequences of the word, we must be careful and atleast believe others.

Lillian: But if I cannot wait.

Abram: Well, what shall I do? I pity us both..but I can't help it at all.

Lillian: With us both..what is the matter with you?

Abram: What do you mean? Is it easy for me to wait. I cannot now psychologically interpret but you may know that I am not an Angel and drinking through your glowing lips the juice from your burning soul and coming in the nearest contact with a body as beautiful as the one you possess not to having complete conjugation is not a very easy matter.

Lillian: And still

Abram: And still, I weigh over my willpower because my mentality claims it.

Lillian: And furthermore nothing?

Abram: What do you mean.

Lillian: You will probably be angry but I can voice my meaning

Abram: I implore you speak! That is what I want, let me hear what you mean?

Lillian: You yourself told me that every person is capable of thinking over all as much as he himself can obtain (thinkingly)

Abram: What do you mean to impart.

Lillian: I mean.. you will not be angry if I will mean as I feel.

Abram: What then do you mean and what do you feel?

Lillian: I mean..that I have lost my wager and for this I beg you our agreement be forgotten. I would also probably remain faithful to my word but I would not be able to remain faithful to my soul, and it you exhibit.

Abram: I beseach you, speak not!

Lillian Thus far I feel.. I cannot believe more then

Abram: I beg you! (wishes to screen her mouth, pause excietment) What do you want to say..do you mean..?(eyes her suspiciously) you then mean that I..

Lillian: I cannot differently

Abram: (Enraged) You are a fool!

Jacob and Anna: (Came in remain standing awhile observing the scene and look anxiously at each other)

Jacob: (Puts on the light in the middle room says) Well if there is no sleep, there can be light.

Anna: Why should there really not be sleep.

Lillian: Why have you pain (What does it concern you) Is not there enough time, we have already slept.

Jacob: See you, a lie must also be known to express. You mean for instance that one is blind and sees nothing going on. Well it can be hidden once, twice but not always. You think it cannot be heard what is going on almost every day since the wedding..m!

Lillian: What do you want, what is seeming to you?

Jacob: That means that it seems to me only, is it? Then tell me I beg you possibly I dont understand. Explain to me, is that the way it should be with lovers? Is that the rule! Why not hear it from you?

Lillian: What do you wish to hear.

Anna: I should begin to understand what is going on here. I have I think even when we were young not found fault with him. Just as you like it but I dont understand it.

Jacob: Well, dont you hear? It is nothing she says and what have you to say Abram? Also nothing? Ah.

Abram: I can positively tell you nothing.

Jacob: Hm you neither, well for instance if I demand you to tell me?

Abram: What shall I tell you.

Jacob: About that concerning for example. Why an argument in the middle of the night and in a loud voice yet.

Abram: And what will be then if I tell you and still you don't understand.

Jacob: Then what is that? It means that it is incomprehensible. Well I am not a very learned person but yet I understand what is said to me.

Abram: You will not understand because it is hardly possible to relate

Lillian: What do you want paper.

Jacob: (Yelling) Quiet you, do you hear! Hold your tongue. Did you hear anything like that. Something new, everything in turmoil and she asks me what I do want.

Abram: (Calm) What is the use of your anger. Now I cannot and and will not tell you anything.

Jacob: I tell you that you will tell! Once and for all I must know.

Anna: Really what is the idea in your angering better explain to him in an orderly way that it cannot be otherwise, does he not understand that himself. We are parents why should we not know what is going on. Possibly it is something we can rectify.

Lillian: But I would like to know why you insist upon it now. I wanted to go to sleep and you come in.

Anna: (To Jacob whispering to a side) Do you hear. You really insinuate, come! (she begins moving, Jacob following, the bell rings and they remain standing)

Jacob: (Astonished) Whom can it be at such a late hour? (goes to open the door)

Abram: (Bitterly) When one does not sleep during the night guests find their way in.

Anna: He, I think it is yourmother speaking there.

Abram: (Wonderingly)

Sarah, Jacob, Calman (Come in)

Sarah: Hi, good evening, if I tell you that I ventured to go in and see why it is light in the middle of the night. My Elizabeth the orphan, God Bless her has been bothering me for several days. She sits up studing half way into the night(pointing at Abram) just like him. She often sees a light appear in the darkness here and someone moves behind it, so naturally. I laugh, what matters it, huh, shrewd child I say you look after he, he, probably it is the children. God bless them. But now she suddenly came flying in breathless and shrieks "Ma, Pa"! it is again light there and someone yells so naturally I woke him up. Supposing it was burglars..(Jestingly) in the end (to the brides' parents) it seems that you are the theives, ha. ha. Well I thank the Lord you frighten but do not punish.

Calman: Already? Have you ended your speech. Only frightened so thank God and why really the illumination in the middle of the night and what are the parents with downcast noses with them. Is that nothing?

Sarah: That is just what I wanted to ask. I wonder how this happens in the middle of the night.

Jacob: (Ironically) Well why really should a mother not know?

Sarah: Would I not tell you if I know.

Jacob: (Speaking through the nose) Is that so? That is you dont know either. (Ironically) Surprising. Well and you dear friend dont know either? Nor you Anna neither. No one knows a secret! (accenting) until when will this go on? (Looks around askingly at each one, as if to say well?)

Calman: That is something did occur here (Ironically) And I thought that my wife came through with the fright.

Abram: To be frightened is of no use because there is no cause for it but just because I have guests during the night the whole family (half ironical) must it happen because we are neighbors.

Sarah: As you see, it is predestined.

Abram: Yes, I see of course I do (laughing silently) Not otherwise then it was destined otherwise you would never be a guest at midnight.

Jacob: Well, what is the use of tomfoolery, if there is outwardly nothing to be frightened at but we elders may be distracted your peace then my child, you will have to be kind enough to find a place where we cannot intrude upon you, but as long as you live in my house and we will hear any natural arguments, we will always interfere, of no secrets whatever do I want to know.

Calman: (To sarah) Did you hear?

Sarah: Woe is me, what secrets my son what is that to hide from Father and Mother-in-law.

Abram: (Smiling bitterly) Why thats what it is, can't you understand it?

Calman: (Ironically) Why can't you understand, possibly if he says..

Sarah: That is what I..

Calman: (With anger) mm animal! Thats probably what you meant to say hm!

Sarah: Do I know? It wonders me of him.

Calman: It wonders you? You dont know your product, do you?

Sarah: What is it dear me a product to cast off. I dont think so.

Calman: He must have set his will on something and it is not to be broken.

Abram: And you, father, know well your product do you. You should have wanted more to know your children then you would know my soul. You really know me on the exterior but inwardly you are far and still farther from knowing me.

Sarah: Dont you worry, I do understand him fully. Something is wrong here, he will not be stubborn for anything without a reason (wips her tearful eyes)

Abram: You need not shield me, it is all one.

Sarah: I would only like to hear from Lillian dear (to Lillian) is he guilty?

Lillian: (Shakes her head in the negative)

Sarah: Well, what have I said?

Jacob: (Imitates her)What have you said for instance?

Sarah: As I said, what did I say? But I feel that something is weighing on him, you dont quite know him, but I do, he can heaven ferbid (dries her eyes) burst and not tell anyone.

Anna: According to your meaning is Lillian entirely guilty?

Sarah: Do I know? What can I know.

Anna: (To Lillian) There are no secrets if not today, we will know tomorrow, but I would like to know at least who caused this dissatisfaction between you.

Abram: (Sternly) What dissatisfaction

Anna: For God's sake, are we then blind?

Abram: A sign that you cannot even notice the difference between dissatisfaction and grief

Anna: That is

Jacob: (Interrupts her) Quiet (To Abram) What did you say? Grief? That means that you have grief, naturally on (points to Lillian with his eyes and forefinger)mi mm. Well why should not we really know what vexes you.

Abram: As I see, you want to deceitfully obtain the secret, I will save you the trouble, I will now narrate but listen attentively!

Lillian: Abram: I beseech you..be good.

Abram: (Looks not understanding her)

Lillian: Do not tell, I beg you do not.

All remain silent and look questioningly at each other

Sarah: (To Anna in a whisper) You are a mother and should have taken care.

Anna: Wh-at.

Sarah: Dont you know now a days a pretty girl, young, well who knows.

Lillian: Not believing her ears) What did you say? Hm.

Sarah: I am not blaming you in the least, child. Are there not many misfortunes now a days with young girls..

Lillian: Hm. hm. (hysterical) ma-maa..

Abram: (Reprimanding) Oh mother (beggingly) How far you have gone

Sarah: (bewildered) Ha? Do I know what you want of me (entangles herself further stammering) really over you

Calman: (Impatient) Over you..over you. (To Abram) why dont you pacify her!

Abram: (Throws a glance to Lillian who is now on the divan after being ushered there by Anna and Jacob a short while. He bows near her head and tearfully says) but I had begged you Why did you force me to take your hand? I am a man true to word, true to word Li llian do you understand?

Lillian: (Suddenly strenghened) Abram I won't (assuredly) I wait..

Abram: (looks thoughtfully into her eyes)

Parents remain standing open mouthed.

Curtain Falls.

ACT III

The same setting as in second act at every opening of the parlor door is heard the frevelous tumult and excitement of young folks.

Lillian: (Is seated near the table)

Abram: (seated near her) Well before we go into the parlor do you promise me.

Lillian: (Nervously) Ah. though I can't

Abram: You must Lillian, did you not say today that you would reconcile, they will soon leave.

Lillian: Am I then angry but what can I do if I am the kind that cannot.

Abram: That signifies that you have not forgotten the other night and I told you that today the past should be forgotten, it must! Today is the end of that foolish wager but it is the first happy day since our marriage and for that all must be forgotten. I will now call in my mother and you go to her.

Lillian: Impatiently Ah..

Abram: Strengthens his look upon her.

Lillian: (With a whimsical smile) Well all-right call her.

Abram: (Calls through the doorway) Mother, Mother come here, you come also Mother-in-law.

Sarah: Anna (come in)

Sarah: The young folks bless them do not get tired of dancing.

Anna: Let them dance while the dancing is good.

Abram: Well, about dancing we will later converse, but now come here (leads forth Sarah and Lillian hooked their small fingers together and recited childingly) Well children make up peace and you shall get some candy.

Lillian: Who ever was angry, we were friends (kisses her mother-in-law) We are friends.

Sarah: I dont even know if you were angry. Ofcourse I wondered you visited seldom my house lately but I bethought the matter possibly it was because there was no frolic, well, why, elderly people, certainly not as long ago.

Anna: Anyhow from now on, they ought to come more often.

Sarah: Why not then, you shall see when the crowd came together to Elizabeth the poor orphan how they carry on. Now they dance now they sing, now again dancing and so on.

Abram: (looks at Lillian trickishly imitating mother) That is what I wanted to say. Ha! Ha! What do you say mother.

Sarah: (slightly disturbed) Go on you rascal enjoy yourself with your guests.

Abram: Also correct, come Lillian (leads her arm in arm into the parlor. exit)

Anna: But still, I cannot understand why Lillian is melancholy just as if a cloud was shading her countenance.

Sarah: That is my opinion also I mean probably you would know since you are her mother. Maybe in a lucky hour. (Looks around if anyone approaches and whispers into her ear a secret) hm!

Anna: She does not even care to speak about that, she either laughs or will not answer altogether go and know.

Sarah: Do you think I will not have the nerve to ask Abram? You will soon see.

Calman and Jacob arrive upon Sarah's words.

Calman: What do you want to ask him?

Sarah: (Slightly embarrassed) What have I to ask him, how business is? Since I am his mother so I will ask him of his health.

Calman: You could have asked that same question before.

Sarah: How do you know whether I did not ask him that. That is how he acts all his life..even such a small matter he will not grant, so I asked him what of it? Can't I ask him again?

Calman: Go ahead, I have nothing against you, are you quite satisfied.

Elizabeth: I am not going home yet uncle, I remain here (she declares as she runs in)

Jacob: Your little one is frivolous, my brothers sonny, Sir Philip does not lose sight of her.

Calman: (unsatisfied murmurs) Well, well (to Elisabeth) you want to stay, stay, but if after you get home you will illuminate the peace and sprowl yourself with the books? You should remember.

Elizabeth: Well, well, I will not study anymore tonight.

Philip: (runs in with hands in pockets) That's all, the party is finished. Everybody is going home.

Elizabeth: Why so sudden?

Philip: Because! What do you mean? Everybody is going to work tomorrow (draws out a gold watch proudly) You see it is later than twelve.

Elizabeth: Go away!

Philip: Dont you want me to escort you home

Lillian: Abram: (come in)

Elizabeth: (draws in her under lip and signals to Philip to keep quiet)

Calman: It is good that you came in now. We are already going home. Good-night, good-night all.

Sarah: Good-night children.

Abram: Good-night (escorts them out. With them go also Anna and Jacob still saying "good-night").

Elizabeth: (is last to follow and says whisperingly to Philip) I will not wait for you outside, do you hear?

Lillian: (remaining alone with Philip says) Do you love Elizabeth?

Philip: What is the matter?

Lillian: I see you are after her.

Philip: It does not mean anything, it may sometimes, but at present, it does not mean anything.

Lillian: (a little jokingly) if sometimes, you mean now.

Philip: So what? ha. ha. What of it.

Lillian: Nothing, I wanted..

Philip: What?

Lillian: (Whispering) I wanted to tell you that (looks around) They are very hard, not agreeable people.

Abram: (Who came in upon the last statement does not pretend to hear) They wanted to know why a year since our betrothal I gave a party.

Lillian: (Cold) And you told them?

Abram: I promised them that tomorrow they would know.

Philip: (wonderingly) That's right, just a year, ha, ha. I think next year will ha, ha, ha.

Abram: What?

Philip: You will see, you will see (looks at his timepiece) good-night (exit)

Lillian: (Arises slowly)

Abram: Are you tired.

Lillian: Yes I am very tired, very tired.

Abram: Very tired ha, well, then let us come into our long possessed but not attained paradise. Loosen your hair (He puts his words into action and she unresistingly lets him) Throw off your shoes, and as holy ones we will appear before the temple of Aphrodite as all we will serve the Godess of love and bring our part into the world by our seeds of generation to come.

Lillian: Must every person serve love?

Abram: If everyone must? (thinks awhile) No in serving there is no must. Service is that inclination of man to appearances which are inconceivable to their minds and of which they realize their duty of submission. The sacrifice to love we do not consider as an appearance as other symbols to which only few are inclined or accustomed to, but for a natural living nourishment which upholds every living creature and to which every being has a matured longing.

Lillian: On that only is love based?

Abram: What made you suddenly desire to speak of that? We will have plenty of time to converse.

Lillian: I will tell you the reason but you should answer my question Is that the basis of love?

Abram: The love certainly is not set only on sexual ties. Naturally it is combined with physical extraction but it depends upon how much the man is physically developed.

Lillian: And I thought..

Abram: What?

Lillian: That love is another thing entirely.

Abram: That shows again dear Lillian that you dont mean what you really mean.

Lillian: Maybe..

Abram: But why did you so mean?

Lillian: I thought that probably it would be possible for us to continue in this respect as thus far two more years.

Abram: (Pale) hi, first of all on what account? And secondly why two more?

Lillian: For what reason I dont know but I dont feel the warmth now as I did then.. Why that is, I do not know. It maybe because I have adopted myself to it, and it maybe that.. (silent)

Abram: What?

Lillian: That/~~it~~ is because I cannot forget..

Abram: m,m.. you cannot forget (pause) then what do you think will be the result?

Lillian: (unresponsive)

Abram: Why are you silent? You know that I am fond of being answered.

Lillian: (Still silent)

Abram: You have nothing to answer? Tell me then Lillian, what will be after the two years pass?

Lillian: I dont know. Did you know what would happen after the first year would be over.

Abram: mm h'mm? That is according to my understanding you want to avenge hi, hi, shall I believe your heroism? It would give me great pleasure if you could be such..but I know that even now your word is in a sudden fit of passion not considerate and for that you could not keep your first word, and if suddenly you became a heroine and want to pay me with two years for one, I may not be afraid to warn you that you should have learned before to be as honest as I am..(steals a look upon her) but it is foolish..well, where there is bidding, I will not be left behind, you want for two more, and I will free you for twenty, and if you want, the same can be forever, why bargain with single years? I am a business man as well as a man of word and I presume (with sobs of grief) that to play away years in burst is very hard (thinks awhile as if to recall something) Yes, it may be that I am too stern, maybe not frivolous enought, therefore, now is the best time, all are asleep, no one will cause alarm..the best time to go. (puts on his hat) good-night, makes his way slowly as if to add to his statement)

Lillian: Automatically) Abram:

Abram: (looks with the deepest hidden embittered face)

Lillian: (feeling his look instinctively lowers her head and weeps)

Abram: (in the same tone) Why the sobs and weeping? For whose sake?

Lillian: (Raises her eyes to him and meets his gaze and as magnetic they connect their look a long while until they bow their heads, the curtain drops so slowly that it is hardly noticeable).

I N T E R L U D E

A dream, portrays a year later and displays a parlor in Abram's home.

Abram: (Sits on a divan with a bowed head)

Jacob with Anna stay as though ready to burst with something.

Jacob: What will be the result?

Abram: (Silent in the same position)

Anna: Woe is me, but answer you may at least.

Abram: (silent)

Jacob: (raises his shoulders and looks over to Anna sidewise) Hm well, well, come now what will you stay for? There where is no answer is one over all.

Anna: What do you mean, that we should go, is that what we came for?

Jacob: Well dont you see?

Anna: (suddenly in tears) mm what do I see? our hard luck? One child and great pleasure he gives me (weeps)

Abram: On whose account are you crying. Did anyone wrong you.

Jacob: No one say that you did it to come out this way, on the other hand we do not accuse you, but what could you do, for instance when you see you did not meet such a clever one as you? You are older than she is please teach her but not this way.

Abram: And how if she will not be taught?

Jacob: What do you mean how. It is not a story or a song to be learned this is entirely different. Naturally little by little until an agreement is formed.

Abram: uh-huh.,an understanding?

Jacob: Ha? what then? I ask you is it good this way?

Abram: It is not good, but I cannot help myself. I cannot possibly see indifferently how my whole dreams become shattered and battered together with myself.

Anna: BUT still you are older you must pardon her.

Abram: Hi, what do you mean by pardon? Why shall you speak as of a childish play, what do you call excuseable? I should not observe her doings? Or can I be made to forget when she acts profoundly against my wishes. I can do her nothing and I do her nothing but I have the right to my moody feelings. I have the right not to make merry and hearty when I cannot.. Anyhow your words are excessive, I do not accuse anyone. I am guilty because I made a false move and for that I pay and perhaps still have to pay.

Lillian: (Comes in) You would do better papa if you would go home, it is true I am a child, he is really more clever than I, but no one need plead for me, I know what I do.

Jacob: Is that so? That is you now remember not to make a bad account with your knowlege do you hear what I tell you.

Lillian: Listen, do you need yell. I already heard.

Jacob: Well, come now A nna, if she does know what she is doing, let it be for the best.

Anna: Wait what is your hurry, what then should she say in a fit of anger, are you any better?

Jacob: She is in anger is she, is that so? Well, well then I will come shen she quiets down, well are you going? (he goes to the door)

Anna: (following slowly) I wish that I had not lived to come to this exoit)

Lillian: Still they know.

Abram: One more time will they know, and it will be tha last. I am already tired. I see clearly that it is reaching the end. I cannot understand how you a face as yours deceitfully little by little plucked the feathers from my wings and from your flaming passion which you turned into a hell you roasted me so that my burning bod y must seek healing in ice cold, cold and colder. Well, I made a mistake and for that mistake which I pay with my whole happy fantasy will I sooner or later pay with my mental apparatus which could muse such lies..

Lillian: How comes it that so clever a man as you could make such a big mistake?

Abram: Well that is how it goes every sage makes a mistake because he thinks he seeks and oft finds something different but he know what he found. Such as you surely will not make mistakes. With your people there is no limit to distinction. You can only know that, that which you wish is a sign that it is good.

Lillian: Just as much as you know that what you wish is a sign that it is good.

ABRAM: Why shall I argue with you when I know it is of no use for that really is my mistake what I meant that to your beauty which is natural will be possible to attach developement. You understand? I thought it could be learned finally it seemed that it is useless to scatter pearls among pigs!

Lillian: You see sometimes if your word insults someone to its utmost that you dont feel.

Abram: I feel, I do feel but do you know how you hurt me to extract from me such words?

Lillian: Well then let it be that I wronged but..

Abram: (Interupting) A wrong..not more?

Lillian: Well a crime, what then can I do more than apoligise? Did you not yourself say that when I beg your pardon you feel as I repent, well how much more can we excuse ourselves?

Abram: That so? You did take it into your head that with repentance we enlighten others. So you gave a thought that not everything can be rectified by pardon. That is what my old idea is, you dont distinguish, you forget that you committed a crime which cannot be withdrawn and for that which cannot be brought back, the pardon is of no avail.

Lillian: What do you mean that way, why cannot it be drawn back..eh what lost?

Abram: (Bitterly) ah..hi not lost? Not lost! Can you make alive the babe which you deathened in you?

Lillian: (Embarrassed after awhile) Well there can be another.

Abram: Another hi? (reproaching instructively) Another is not the same. I wanted to have fruit of my first healthiest love passion and if you deceived me! and did not even find it necessary to tell me, ask what you wish to do, then leave my light, let me be satisfied with that atleast what will no more remain after me. That which I did not want. Your child as I see would not anyway be mine and the only thing for which I will thank you is that you should not be near me..and if you will tire this way, you can leave me.

Lillian: (Rises and lets herself go)

Elizabeth: (Comes in notices the scene) I saw your parents going on the car, are they going from you Lillian?

Lillian: (does not answer, goes out)

Elizabeth: Is she also angry, nowheres are they content.

Abram: What do you mean everywhere. Are you also dissatisfied?

Elizabeth: (Silent)

Abram: Lillian is unhappy because I am to tedious for her but your Philip is a lively youth.

Elizabeth: If he would be (lowers her head) like you.)

Abram: Is that so? You would rather be pleased if he were like me.. He, he, that is how it goes. There is no satisfaction. Do you remember I one time read to you from the collection of

poems by Jehaash "Two Flowers" one flower in the wilderness weeps because is has not attained the loving care of human fingers, another one in the garden weeps because it waits any moment to be plucked by human fingers. Ha. Ha.(nodding) so is the way of the world

Elizabeth: Well, so, it is so, it does not make it any easier for me. I can't see it all sumed up. I only know that I am becoming sterner and stricter with him. Everyday the same cheapness the same rudeness, whew! it nauseates!

Abram: Why is this? Why should we not be able to forsee what we see afterwards, it is one year already since your marriage and before the wedding you also knew him one year, how comes it?

Elizabeth: I have known him before also.

Abram: But?

Elizabeth: But it was all the same to me.

Abram: What do you mean?

Elizabeth: (looks around searchingly, silent)

Abram: I dont understand what do you mean by saying it was all the same to you?

Elizabeth: Because.

Abram: What?

Elizabeth: I did not ever think that you would marry so soon. I thought that you would study yet so I kept quiet..no one knew how I missed you when..

Abram: (Pale) I beg you have mercy, go home, go home..

Philip: (comes in) Hello! What is the matter? Where did you get to? Do you have to be looked for. A good thing Mr. Lotkin told me that you took the 23 car so I understood where you were.

Elizabeth: You may know, and you may not know, I will not go home.

Philip: What is the matter?

Elizabeth: You know what. I need not begin to tell you.

Philip: How do you know that I know. Come home and tell me so I will know.

Elizabeth: I will not go.

Philip: Why?

Elizabeth: Because I cannot stand your crowd there. I told you that I will not have them in the house.

Philip: Well alright, you can tell me the same thing at home but not elsewhere. Do you hear, what goes on in our home no one need know. You ought to be a lady, he, he, you hear? (pause) well come.

Abram: What have you no time (Ironically) you may atleast ask how your cousin is.

Philip: I have no time now. A friend is waiting for me at home. (to Elizabeth) W ell come. (he begins to go)

Elizabeth: I go Abram with just such a heart as you are remaining with.. I see..(goes off with Philip)

Abram: (Thinks a long while) That means that this is the harmony of married life "What goes on in the home, is not to be known outside" that is, that when my friends jeered at me I mused over a holy entire harmonical future, they were right (determined) that means that I remain the fool (thinking) but hi..(wants to ask a question but reminds himself that he is alone) he mhe? (Thoughtfully extracts from the closet a braided belt from a faminine coat, steps upon a stool binds it to the centre of the fixture, ties it around his throat)

Lillian: (Comes upon the threshold looks with terror and speechless)

Abram: One wise thing you can yet do which will forgive all your foolishness (begging) remove the stool from under my feet.

Lillian: Slowly ventures to go near him.

CURTAIN DROPS

CONTINUATION OF THIRD ACT.

The same position as at conclusion of third act.

Abram and Lillian (seated as then with bowed heads but it seems as though they were asleep quite a long while. In the doorway appears Jacob and Anna who regard the situation)

Anna: (Very quietly whispering) If so why intrude? Come, come better (silently they retreat)

Lillian: (After while) who could have just gone?

Abram: Who? Have you forgotten that you just told them to leave?

Lillian: Whom?

Abram: What do you mean (not assured) your parents.

Lillian: (Mournfully) You dreamt..(pose heaving a sigh) I also..

Abram: (Looks around) Yes I dreamed (his face expresses great doubt) a bitter one..a very bitter dream.

CURTAIN DROPS

END